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fungi when in the button or unexpanded stage ; also, those in which the flesh has begun to decay, even if only slightly. 2. Avoid all fungi which have stalks with a swollen base surrounded by a sac-like or scaly envelope, especially if the gills are white. 3. Avoid fungi having a milky juice, unless the milk is reddish. 4. Avoid fungi in which the cap or pileus is thin in proportion to the gills, and in which the gills are nearly all of equal length, especially if the pileus is bright colored. 5. Avoid all tube-bearing fungi in which the flesh changes color when cut or broken, or where the mouths of the tubes are reddish, and in the case of other tube-bearing fungi experiment with caution. 6. Fungi which have a sort of spider-web or flocculent ring round the upper part of the stalk should in general be avoided. To these simple rules, the observance of which should prevent any case of serious poisoning, though, as the writer states, it need not be assumed that a fungus is poisonous when it is merely indigestible, in consequence of the way in which it is cooked, numerous exceptions are possible in favor of aberrant edible forms ; but they are for experts, and the caution is worth heeding that "the beginner is, of course, under the necessity of following the rules implicitly."

Another recent contribution to the same subject, and likewise an outcome of work done in the first instance in connection with the United States Department of Agriculture, is Dr. Taylor's *Student's Handbook*,<sup>1</sup> illustrated by a considerable number of plates, some of them colored, and containing recipes for preparing and cooking fungi, in addition to the customary keys and descriptions. T.

**Natal Plants.** — Under this title J. Medley Wood and Maurice S. Evans have begun the publication of a series of descriptions and figures, in quarto, of the indigenous plants of Natal, with notes on their distribution, economic value, native names, etc. The first part, recently issued, contains fifty figures and descriptions.

**Professor Weed's Seed-Travellers**<sup>2</sup> is one of the helpful little books designed to aid in nature-study, and if, as the author recommends, it is used in connection with observations upon the specimens it describes it can be made very useful. The illustrations, about half

<sup>1</sup> Taylor, Thomas. *Student's Handbook of Mushrooms of America, Edible and Poisonous*. Washington, A. R. Taylor, 1897, 1898. 8°.

<sup>2</sup> *Seed-Travellers, Studies of the Methods of Dispersal of Various Common Seeds*. By Clarence Moores Weed. Boston, Ginn & Co., 1898. 12°, pp. 53, ff. 36.

of which are original, probably have not come out quite as was intended, and it is not evident that most of them really serve the purpose of the book ; but two or three of them are very attractive.

**The Grasses of Uruguay.** — Prof. J. Archevalato has recently brought together in a large volume<sup>1</sup> the results of his study of this important group. The first twenty-eight pages are devoted to an organographic account of the grasses, some thirty-five pages are given to a discussion of what is called applied agrostology, and a very full index to both popular and scientific names occupies twenty-two pages. The remainder of the work consists of rather full descriptions of the species. Unfortunately, keys, which would have made the work more usable, have not been provided either for genera or species.

T.

**The Metropolitan Parks of Boston.** — The last report written by Charles Eliot,<sup>2</sup> which is very tastefully gotten up, contains much of interest to the landscape architect, many plates which ingeniously indicate by means of folding duplicate foregrounds the means of improving existing features, and an analysis of the commoner types of woodland scenery, which, with the accompanying reproductions of photographs, will also be of use to persons interested in plant communities as viewed by the œcologist.

T.

**Botanical Notes.** — The vegetation of the white sands east of the San Andreas Mountains, in southern New Mexico, on which Miss Eastwood had previously published, forms the subject of a note in the issue of *Science* of July 29, by Cockerell and Garcia, from which it appears that on these sands, 97% of the substance of which is gypsum (calcium sulphate), a considerable flora flourishes, some of the constituents of which appear to have undergone considerable modification in connection with their environment.

Professor Hitchcock, who for some years has been studying the weeds of Kansas, publishes, as *Bulletin No. 80 of the Experiment Station of the Kansas State Agricultural College*, a paper on their distribution. For the 209 species listed, the geographical distribution

<sup>1</sup> *Las Gramineas Uruguayas.* Montevideo, 1898. 4°, pp. 553, ff. 13 + lxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Vegetation and Scenery in the Metropolitan Reservations of Boston.* A forestry report written by Charles Eliot and presented to the Metropolitan Park Commission, Feb. 15, 1897, by Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, Landscape Architects. Lamson, Wolfe & Co., Boston, New York, and London, 1898.